

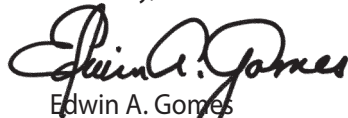
Dear Neighbor,

As Senate chairman of the legislature's Select Committee on Housing, I have the unique opportunity and responsibility to lead the way on passing housing-related bills. Our state is facing an affordable housing crisis. Many residents in our state can barely afford a decent place to live. According to a recent report, a person must earn over \$19 an hour to afford the rent for a modest two-bedroom apartment in Connecticut. I find this shocking. As an elected official from an urban area of the state, I feel it is my duty to work to make more housing available at prices people can actually afford.

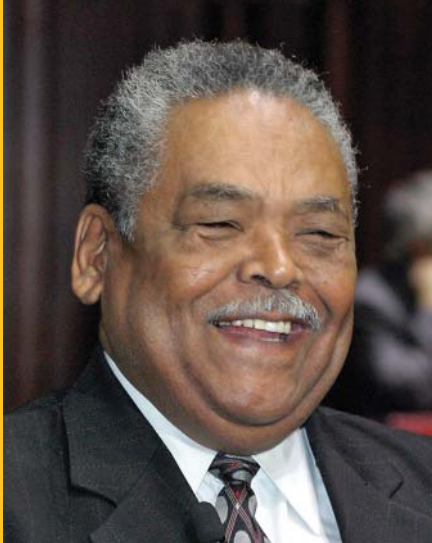
Recently, the Select Committee on Housing finished its business for the legislative session by passing 10 bills, including measures that would expand the housing tax credit program, provide additional funds for special needs elderly in Bridgeport, increase funding for rental assistance and supportive services for the elderly and disabled, and to restore funding to the Rental Assistance Program.

Each of these bills is intended to help provide affordable and decent housing for every resident of the state of Connecticut. This needs to be one of the legislature's top priorities, and as your state Senator and co-chair of the Housing Committee I will make every effort to see that it is.

Sincerely,



Edwin A. Gomes  
State Senator, 23rd District



Your State Senator  
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## FROM YOUR STATE SENATOR **EDWIN A. GOMES**

### 2006 HOUSING COMMITTEE BILLS

None of these bills has yet become law; at this point they have all been referred to other committees. I will work hard to ensure these committees pass these bills along for a full vote of the legislature. Bills that were approved by the Housing Committee include the following:

#### ***S.B. 356, An Act Concerning Independent Living for Special Needs Elderly in the City of Bridgeport***

This bill would provide state funds to match a federal grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development that will assist a supervised independent living facility for the elderly in Bridgeport.

#### ***S.B. 357, An Act Increasing Funding for Rental Assistance and Supportive Services for Elderly and Disabled Persons, and HB 5108, An Act Concerning the Rental Assistance Program***

The first bill establishes a program of rental assistance and support services for low income, non-elderly disabled people in existing public or private housing. And, along with the second bill, it expands state rental assistance programs, allowing the elderly and disabled to have more choices for safe, affordable and decent housing.

#### ***S.B. 299, An Act Concerning the Housing Tax Credit Program***

This bill increases the funding available for the Housing Tax Credit Program. This program provides tax credits to businesses as an incentive to finance housing developments. It has been reported that the \$5 million in tax credits that was awarded in 2005 will leverage more than \$74 million in housing development activity, producing 391 new housing units.

#### ***H.B. 5107, An Act Concerning the Beyond Shelter Program***

This bill provides additional funding for the Beyond Shelter Program. This program helps ends the cycle of homelessness by providing assistance to families once they leave shelters or transitional housing. Types of assistance include: education on tenant/landlord rights



and responsibilities; providing life skills workshops; and providing help with accessing mental health and substance abuse treatment services. This bill has been referred to the Appropriations Committee.

#### ***S.B. 297, An Act Concerning the Use of the General Fund Budget Surplus for the Housing Trust Fund***

This bill provides additional funding for the Housing Trust Fund, which was established by the legislature in 2005. The Housing Trust Fund, the first of its kind in state history, will be used to develop housing throughout the state. By providing loans and grants to low- and moderate-income working families, the trust fund will help people access much needed affordable housing in our state. This bill has been referred to the Appropriations Committee.

